

News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Memorial Day Weekend Kicks Off Summer Season

Some Campsites Still Available, But Do Not Delay!

SACRAMENTO – The traditional kick-off for the summer camping and recreation season is Memorial Day weekend, and this year hundreds of thousands of campers will be arriving at California State Park campgrounds on Friday, May 23, 2003, the start of the holiday weekend.

As always, the most popular campgrounds on the reservation system fill up fast and early. However, according to State Parks' reservation system computers, there are a limited number of reservable campsites still available for the Memorial Day weekend if people act quickly. But be aware that availability at any of the parks listed below can change daily, or even hourly, so do not delay.

Parks with availability for May 23, 24 & 25 include: Benbow Lake (near Garberville), Castle Crags (near Dunsmuir), Colonel Allensworth (north of Bakersfield), Del Norte (south of Crescent City), Humboldt Redwoods (south of Eureka), Jedediah Smith (east of Crescent City), Lake Oroville (east of Oroville), Samuel P. Taylor (west of San Rafael), Standish Hickey (north of Leggett), and Woodson Bridge (east of Corning) State Parks.

Parks with availability for one or two night stays May 23 and 25 include: Anza-Borrego (east of San Diego), Calaveras (northeast of Arnold), Caswell Memorial (south of Ripon), Colusa-Sacramento River (in Colusa), Cuyamaca (northeast of San Diego), Folsom Lake (near Folsom), Grizzly Creek Redwoods (south of Eureka), Malakoff Diggins (northeast

of Nevada City), **McConnell** (southeast of Delhi), **Millerton Lake** (northeast of Fresno), **Mount Diablo** (near Danville), **Lake Perris** (southeast of Riverside), **Prairie Creek Redwoods** (north of Eureka), **Richardson Grove** (south of Garberville), **Salt Point** (north of Jenner), **San Luis Reservoir** (west of Los Banos), **San Simeon** (south of San Simeon), **Tahoe** (east of Tahoe City) and **Turlock Lake State Recreation Area** (east of Modesto).

To make California State Park reservations call toll-free 800-444-PARK (7275) or go on line to www.parks.ca.gov

However, if you cannot find a reservation spot you like, there are first-come, first-served campsites that should be considered. Those include **Plumas-Eureka** (west of Graeagle), **Gaviota** (west of Santa Barbara), **Emma Wood** (in Ventura) and **Indian Grinding Rock** (northeast of Jackson) State Parks. More information can be found on the State Parks website listed above and make sure you read the camping tips listed below.

The Memorial Day weekend is the first big camping weekend of the summer season and one of the big three camping weekends of the entire year, along with the July 4th and Labor Day weekends.

It's always a good idea to call ahead to check on park conditions. And whether you want a reservation site or a first-come, first-served site, consider the following:

Camping Tips

- Determine where you want to camp and be flexible. Have alternate parks in mind in case your first choice is booked.
- Consider non-reservation sites. If the reservation sites are full, look for a first-come, first-served campground and try and arrive on a Wednesday or Thursday to maximize your chance to get a campsite. For information on first-come, first-served campgrounds call 1-800-777-0369.
- Consider less busy days. Sometimes reservations are easier to make if you can camp mid-week.

- Consider less popular camps. Southern coastal campgrounds can be full year-round. You may have better luck getting reservations at State Parks north of Santa Cruz or inland. Look for sites that are more remote, away from major metropolitan areas.
- Remember the holiday crush. The closer you try to make reservations to a holiday (Memorial Day weekend, Fourth of July, or Labor Day weekend), the further north and inland you may need to go.
- Consider cancellations. Check the Reserve America website or call the 1-800-444-7275 phone number. Cancellations are rare, but they do occur.
- If the campground you want is booked, consider a day visit to the park for a picnic, hike or other outdoor recreation.
- The "shoulder season" (April, May, September and October) is a good time to enjoy California State Parks. The weather during these months is usually good.

The annual day-use pass is \$67 and it provides access to more than 230 state parks.

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